

I have Asthma.

by Amanda Thomsen



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I have Asthma

Dear Parent/Carer

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This book explains what asthma is to children 4 to 8 years old. The information is factual, as we have found that children are more trusting of adults if they are honest with them.

Children's treatment will vary, so you may need to explain to your child that some things in the book may not apply to them.

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As you read this book with your child encourage them to ask questions. If you would like help with this, ask a health worker involved in your child's treatment.

This edition of "I Have Asthma" has been designed to be downloaded via the internet and printed by the recipient.

Please complete the questionnaire attached in the back of the book and return to me. Your feedback will be used to evaluate the usefulness of this book.

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Amanda Thomsen

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Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick

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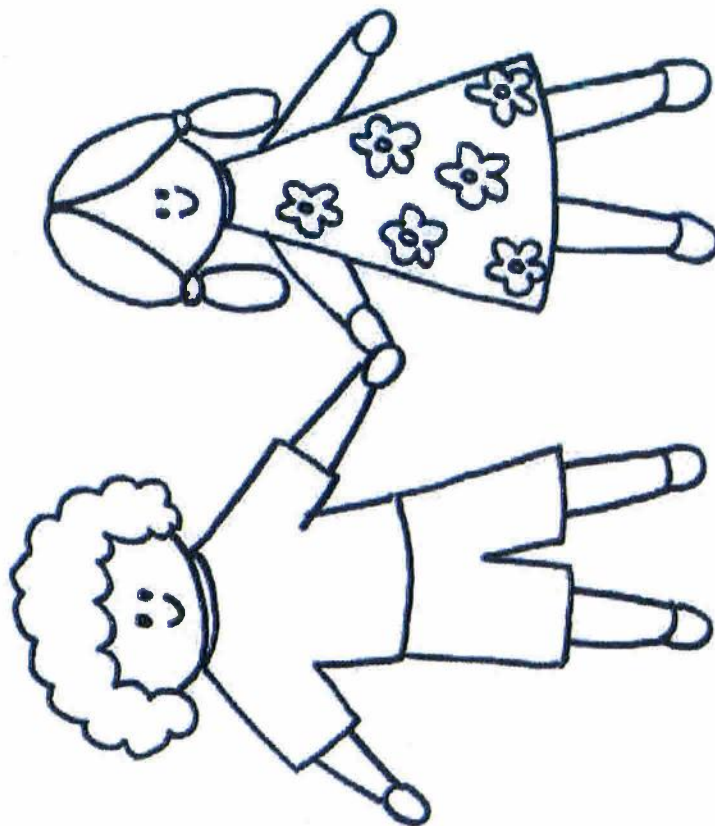
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I have Asthma.



This book is written for you
It will tell you all about your asthma.
Colour in the pictures as you read the book.

This book belongs to...

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What is Asthma?

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Asthma is a breathing problem.

When you breathe air goes in and out of your lungs. Inside your lungs are lots and lots of breathing tubes, like drinking straws. At the end of the tubes are little balls that look like bunches of grapes.

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When you have an asthma attack the breathing tubes become very skinny and blocked which makes it hard to breathe.

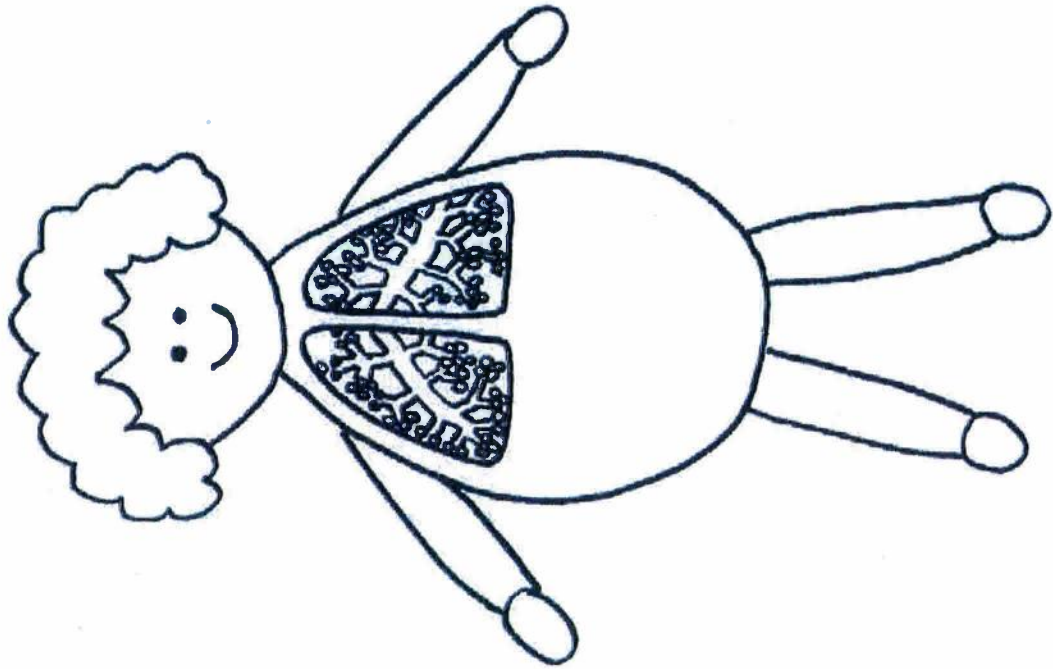
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You may also cough and sometimes your breathing will sound strange like a whistle. This is called a 'wheeze'.

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Breathing hard and coughing can sometimes make your tummy sore and you may even vomit.

Colour in your lungs



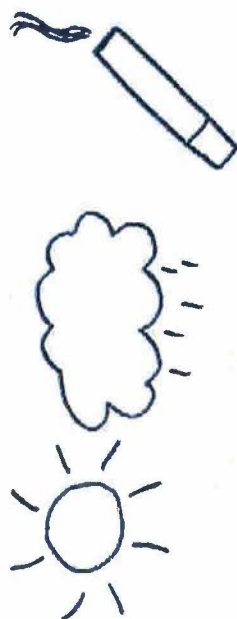
Triggers.

Triggers are what start an asthma attack.
Not everyone has the same triggers.

Some triggers are:

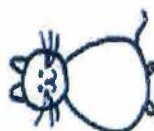
- ☆ When you have a cold or have a runny nose
- ☆ Smoke, especially from cigarettes
- ☆ Cockroaches
- ☆ Dust mites. These are tiny bugs
- ☆ Animal fur, like cat and dog hair
- ☆ Running around, playing sport
- ☆ Plants and grass
- ☆ Changes in the weather – if one day it's sunny and the next day it's cold

Colour in these things that trigger
or start your asthma



Weather

Cigarette smoke



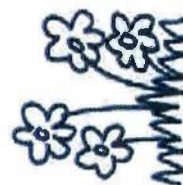
Animal fur



Dust mites



Cockroaches



Grass and pollen



Colds



Exercise

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Puffers

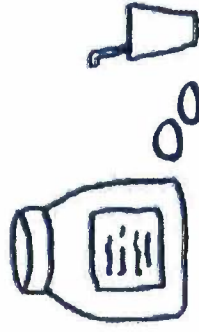
You will need to take some medicine to make you feel better. If you have a bad asthma attack you may be given tablets or syrup to take for a few days, but most asthma medicines are puffers.

Puffers come in different colours and different shapes.

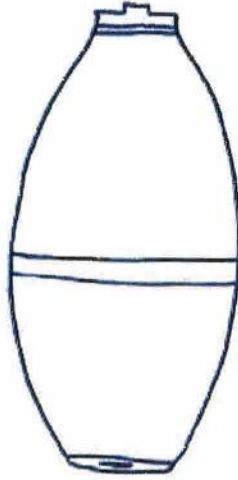
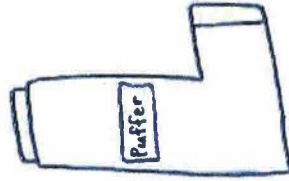
They can look like the letter L, they can look like a rocket, or they can look like a spaceship.

Some of the colours are:

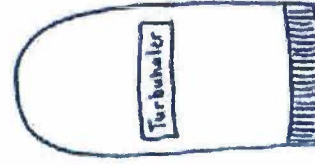
blue red
purple orange
brown



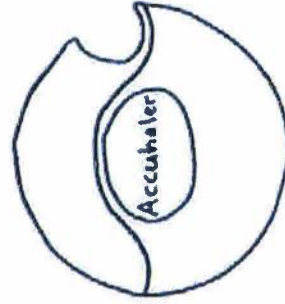
Tablets or syrup



Puffer and spacer



Turbuhaler



Accuhaler

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Relievers.

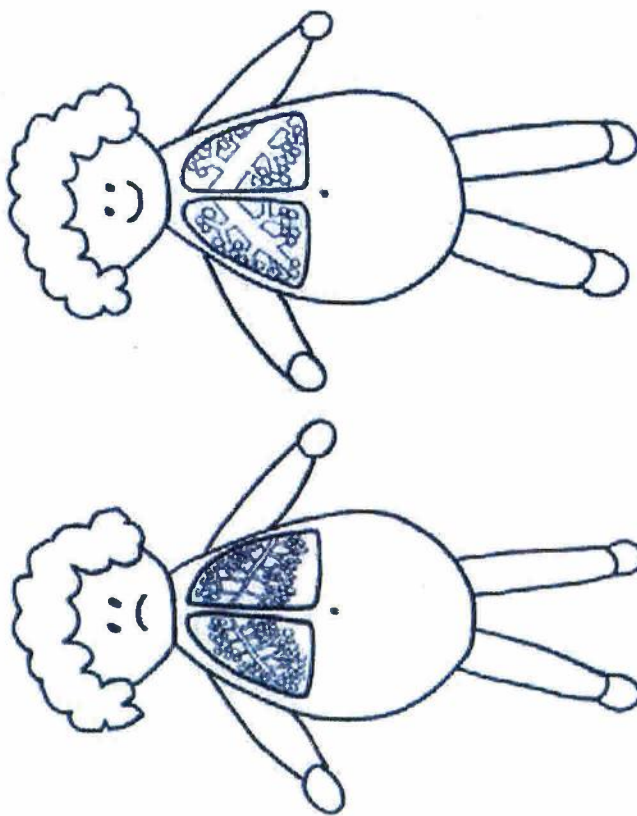
Reliever puffers are **blue**.

Use your blue puffer when it is hard for you to breathe or if you start coughing and wheezing.

You may need to use this one before sport or exercise.

The blue puffer relaxes the tight muscles around the breathing tubes - this makes it easier to breathe.

Spot the difference...



Hard to breathe

Easy to breathe

Preventers.

Preventer puffers are **yellow**,
orange or **brown**.

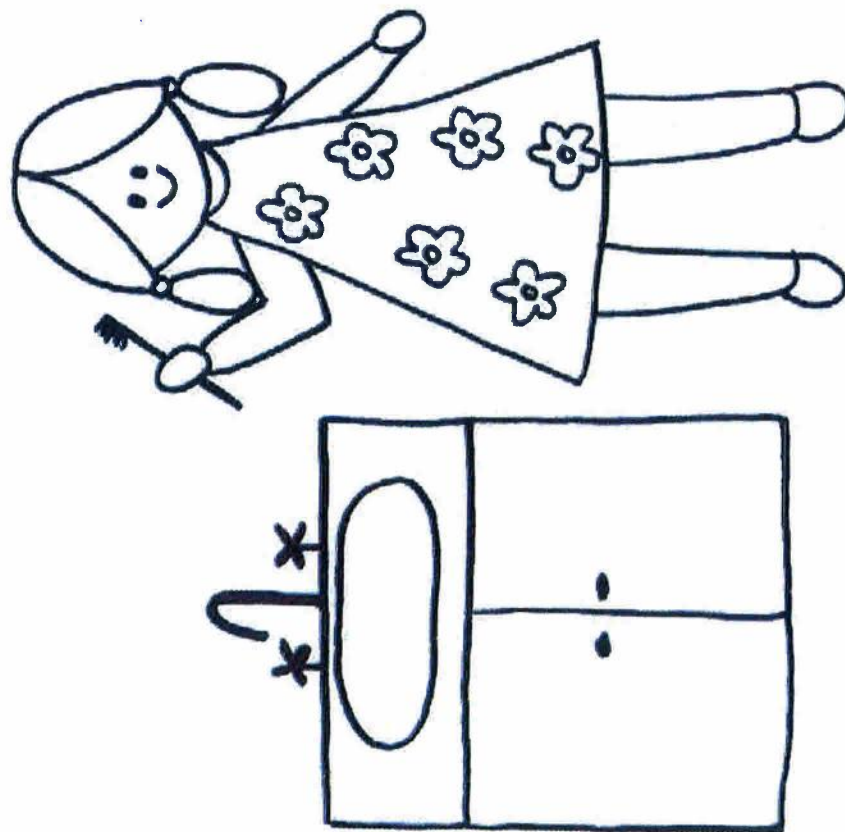
You will only need a preventer puffer if your asthma is a problem.

Preventers keep the inside of the breathing tube open, so it is easy for you to breathe. They need to be taken every day, even when you are feeling well.

Preventers can sometimes make the inside of your mouth sore.

It is very important not to have a drink straight after using your preventers but you should clean your teeth or rinse your mouth with water and then spit out.

Remember to clean your teeth or rinse your mouth



Combination Therapy.

Combination therapy puffers are **red**
or **purple**.

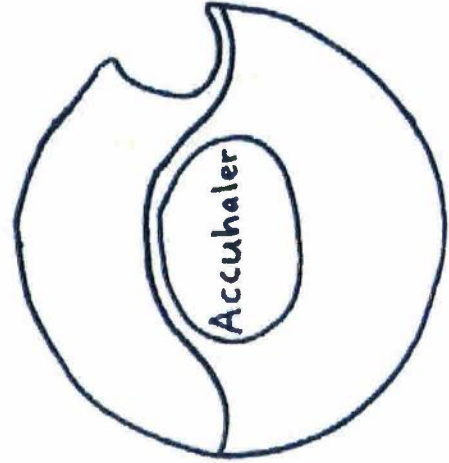
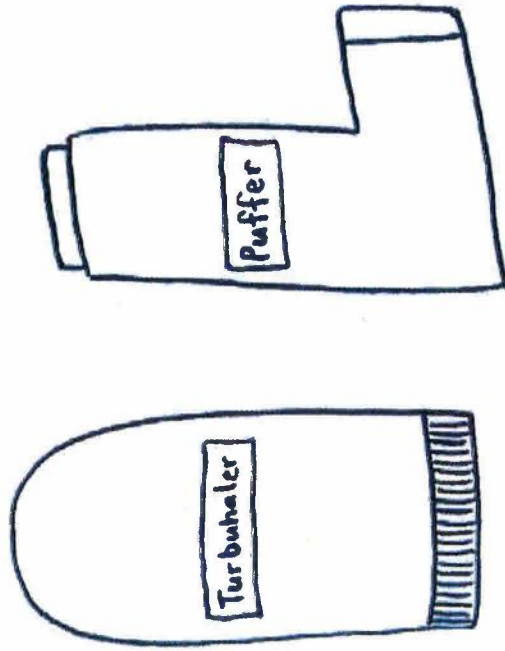
They have 2 medicines in them:

1. A preventer
2. A reliever that keeps your breathing tubes open for a long time.

Combination therapy puffers need to be taken every day even if you feel well.

Remember to clean your teeth or rinse your mouth with water and then spit out so you don't get a sore mouth.

What colour is your combination therapy puffer?



Skinny Spacers.

Skinny Spacer

A spacer is a plastic tube that helps you to use your puffers properly.

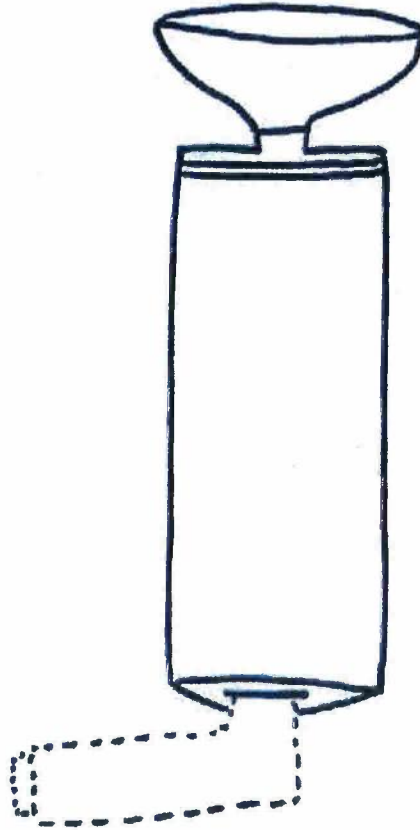
You will use a skinny spacer if you are 5 years old or younger.

How old are you? _____

The puffer fits into one end of the spacer. At the other end is a face mask that goes over your nose and mouth.

The face mask may be a bit scary but it will not hurt you.

You need to breathe in and out 4 to 6 times after each puff.



You may like to put the face mask on your teddy or doll and give them a puff to make them feel better.

Football Spacers.

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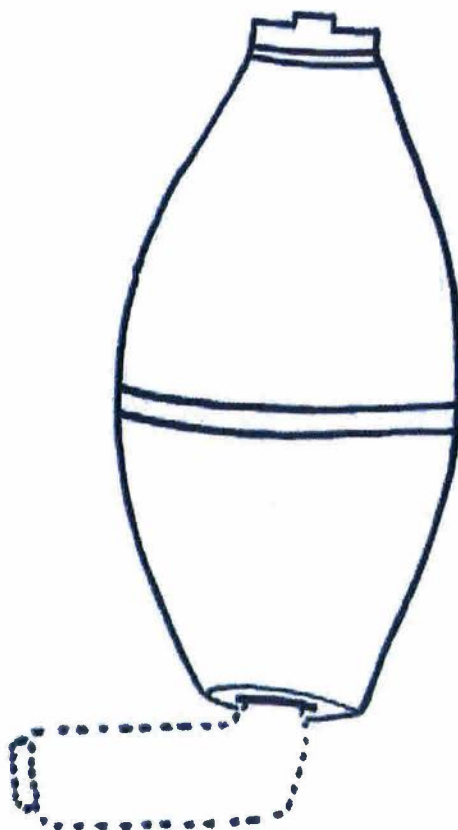
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Football Spacer



A spacer is a plastic tube that helps you to take your puffers properly.

You will use the football spacer if you are 6 years or older.

How old are you? _____

The puffer fits into one end of the spacer and the other end goes into your mouth. It is important that you keep your lips closed over the mouthpiece.

You may be able to help press the puffer. You need to breathe in and out 4 to 6 times after each puff.

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Turbuhalers.

Turbuhalers are puffers that look like rockets.

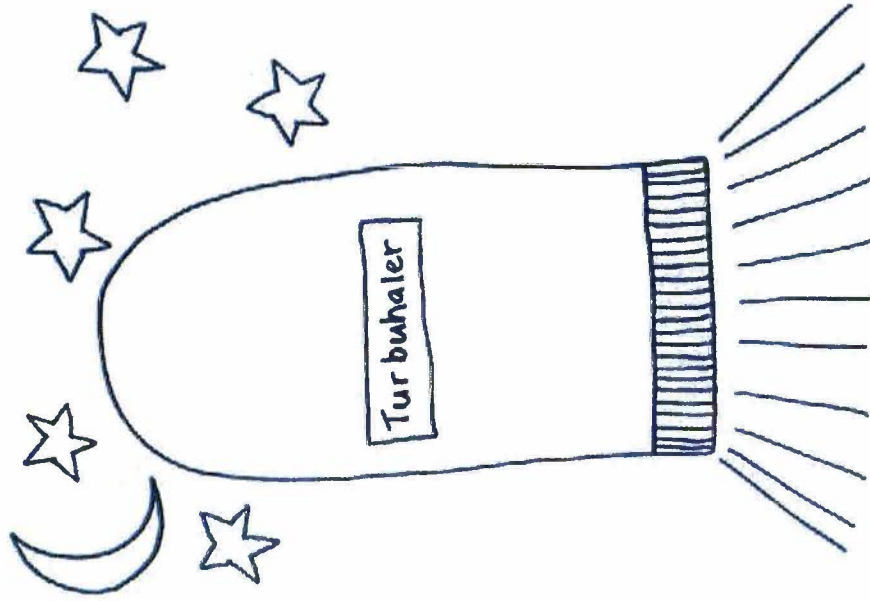
You need to be about 6 or 7 years old to use a turbuhaler properly.

It is very important that the turbuhaler is standing upright, just like a rocket, when you turn the bottom to get your medicine.

Before you use it, you need to turn the coloured base to the right and then back to the left until you hear a click.

Turbuhalers can fit into your pocket and are good if you need to take a puffer before sports or at school.

What colour is your turbuhaler?



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Accuhalers.

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Accuhalers are a type of puffer that look like spaceships.

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Accuhalers will not help you during an asthma attack, but are taken every day to help keep your asthma away.

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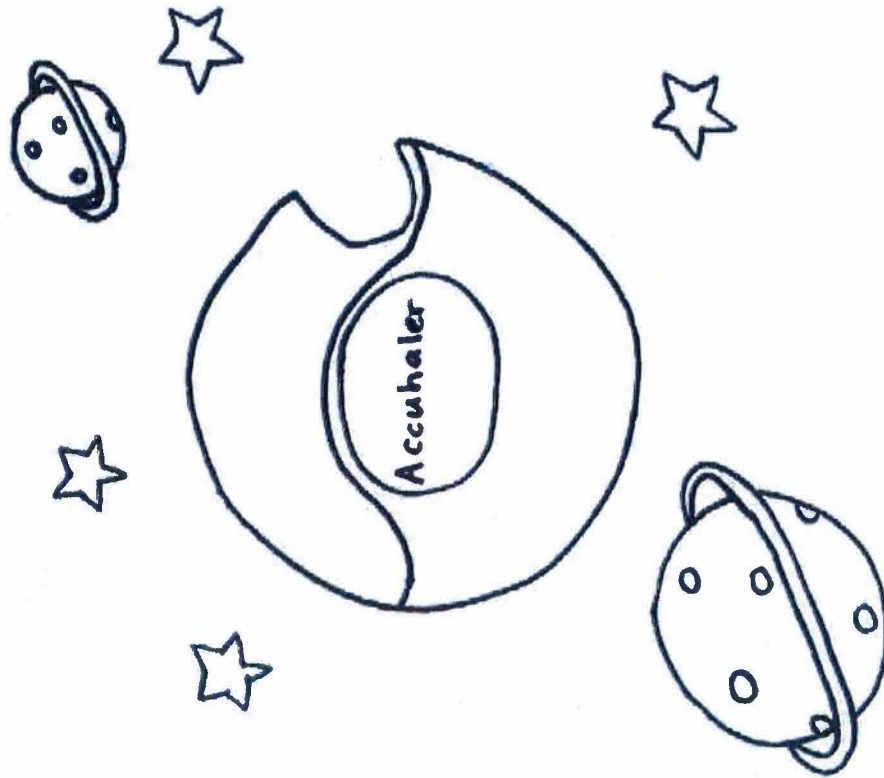
You need to be about 7 years old to use an accuhaler properly.

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Before you use it, you need to slide the cover back until you hear a click and then press the lever down until you hear another click.

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What colour is your accuhaler?



Playing Sport.

Exercising or playing sport is very important. It keeps you healthy. But sometimes when you run around a lot or play sport you may begin to cough, wheeze or find it hard to breathe. This could be an asthma attack.

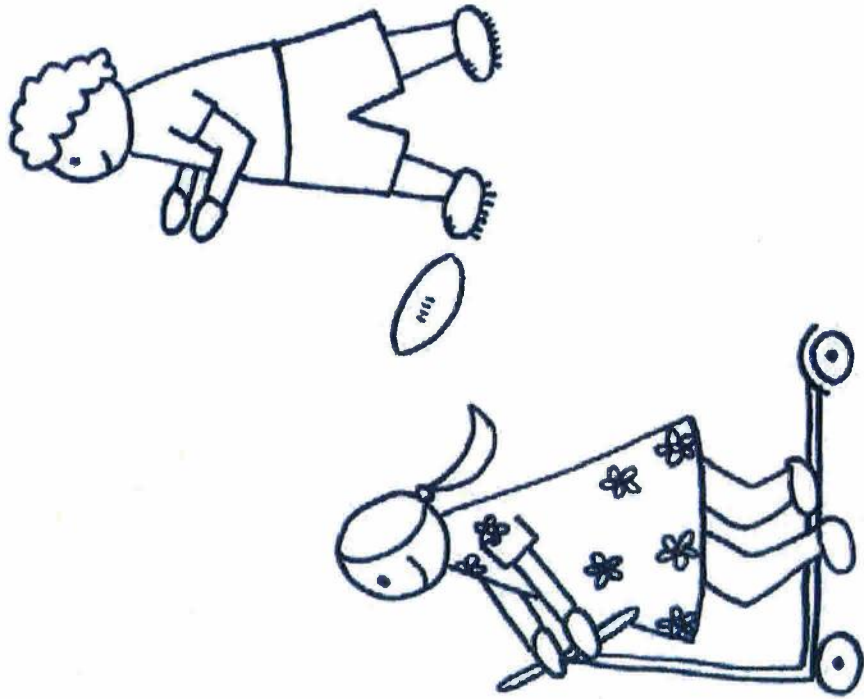
This kind of asthma attack can be helped by:

- ☆ doing warming up exercises before playing sport.
- ☆ take 1-2 puffs of your blue reliever puffer 5-10 minutes before warming up.
- ☆ doing cooling down exercises after.

If you get an asthma attack while exercising or playing sport, stop exercising and have 1-2 puffs of your blue reliever puffer.

Only start exercising or playing sport again if your asthma attack has finished.

Tell your doctor if you have asthma attacks when exercising or playing sport. They will tell you which is the best medication for you to take.



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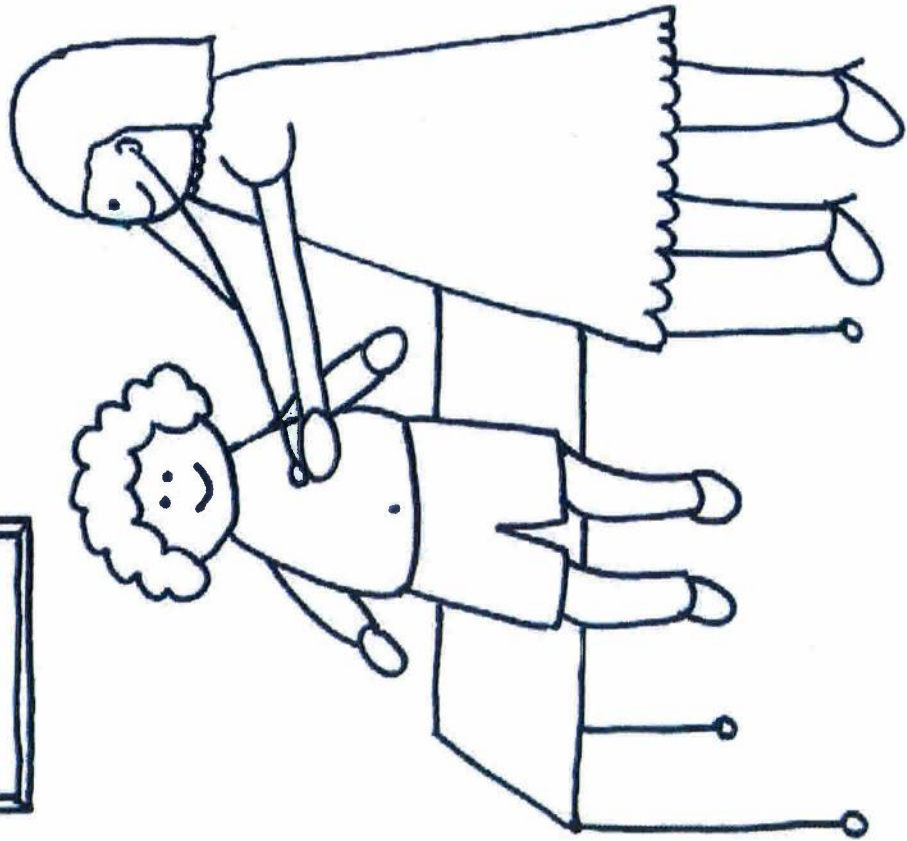
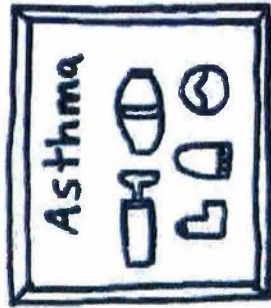
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Visiting the Doctor.

It is very important to see your doctor often to make sure your asthma treatment is ok.

Don't forget to use your puffer as long as your doctor says to, even though you feel well. This will help to keep your asthma away so you can play and do all the things that your friends do.



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Cleaning Spacers

Spacers need to be cleaned every 1-2 weeks.

1. Pull the spacer apart.

2. Wash the spacer in warm soapy water.

3. Do not rinse the spacer.

The detergent leaves a slippery surface that prevents medication from sticking to the inside of the spacer.

4. Leave the spacer to air dry.

Spacers take a long time to dry. It may be convenient to wash the spacer in the evening and dry overnight.

For more asthma information

Contact your local Asthma Foundation
1800 645 130.

Questionnaire

Please take a few minutes to complete and return the following questionnaire. The questionnaire is strictly confidential, and there will be no method of identifying respondents. Therefore please do not write your name on the questionnaire.

The information gathered from the questionnaires will be used to evaluate the effectiveness and usefulness of this book.

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Parent/Carer Questionnaire "I Have Asthma" - A Children's Colouring Book

Please tick the most appropriate response ie. (✓)

How old is your child? Years Months	Your post code:
Generally, did you find the booklet "I Have Asthma" useful?	Is your child a: () Boy () Girl
Did reading "I Have Asthma" help...	
you and your child identify what triggers his/her asthma?	() Yes () No () Not sure
you and your child use a puffer and spacer?	() Yes () No () Not sure
you and your child understand reliever medications?	() Yes () No () Not sure
you and your child understand preventer medications?	() Yes () No () Not sure

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Did reading "I Have Asthma" encourage you and your child to talk about Asthma?	() Yes () No
Is the language in "I Have Asthma" suitable for your child?	() Yes () No
Did your child like the pictures in "I Have Asthma"?	() Yes () No
Do you or your child have any other comments regarding "I Have Asthma"? If yes, we would value them 	

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Delivery Address:
PO Box 32
ROZELLE NSW 2039

No stamp required
if posted in Australia



I HAVE ASTHMA
Reply Paid 32
ROZELLE NSW 2039

First Aid for an Asthma Attack

Step 1.

- Sit child upright.
- Do not leave child alone.



Step 2.



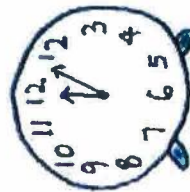
- Immediately give 4 separate puffs of a reliever (blue puffer):
 - Give 1 puff at a time using a spacer.
 - Allow the child to breathe 4 times between each puff of medication.

If a spacer is not available, simply use the puffer on its own.

Step 3.

- Wait 4 minutes.

1 2 3 4



Step 4.

- If there is no improvement repeat steps 2 and 3.
- If still no improvement call an ambulance
- Keep repeating steps 2 and 3 whilst waiting for the ambulance.

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